

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended):

An apparatus for supplying and wrapping elongate articles with labels, and capable of handling elongate articles for wrapping a label thereabout, said labels having an adhesively coated side, said elongate articles each having a peripheral surface, said apparatus including:

a label roller assembly for supplying labels to said apparatus;

a rotatable puck mechanism, said puck mechanism having an interrupted circumferential surface ~~defining an opening, said opening adapted to receive a predetermined elongate article;~~

means for rotating said puck mechanism;

means for transporting at least one of said labels toward ~~said opening~~ an interruption in ~~[[of]]~~ said puck mechanism circumferential surface; and

means for transporting said peripheral surface of said elongate article ~~toward~~ through said ~~opening~~ interruption in ~~[[of]]~~ said puck mechanism circumferential surface.

Claim 2 (currently amended):

The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said means for transporting said peripheral surface of said elongate object comprises a gripping mechanism, said gripping mechanism arranged to receive one of said elongate articles and guide said one of said elongate articles toward said interruption ~~opening~~ in said rotatable puck mechanism circumferential surface; and further including means for driving said gripping mechanism.

Claim 3 (original):

The apparatus of claim 1 further including at least one label sensor device.

Claim 4 (currently amended):

A label applicator apparatus for receiving a label from a roll and applying the label to an elongate article, said label having a first side and a second side, said second side being coated with a pressure sensitive adhesive, said apparatus comprising:

a label roller assembly for supplying labels to said apparatus;

at least one gripper element for grasping and moving said elongate article;

means for driving said gripper element;  
a rotatable puck mechanism, said puck mechanism having an interrupted circumferential surface ~~defining an opening~~ for receiving said elongate object; and  
means for rotating said puck mechanism,  
said at least one gripper element being movable between a first position and a second position, said elongate article passing through an interruption in said puck mechanism circumferential surface when said gripper element moves from said first position to said second position.

Claim 5 (currently amended):

A labeling apparatus in which pressure sensitive adhesively backed labels which are releasably adhered to a backing strip are each respectively attached to an elongate object, the apparatus including:

a label roller assembly for supplying said labels and adhered backing strip ~~to said apparatus~~;  
label guide means for moving said labels through said apparatus;  
a label stripping assembly for removing said labels from said backing strip;  
a puck assembly, said puck assembly including a puck member having an interrupted circumferential surface ~~defining an opening~~;  
a gripper assembly for grasping and moving an elongate object ~~relative to said opening~~  
through an interruption in said puck mechanism circumferential surface; and  
a take-up roll for receiving said backing strip.

Claim 6 (currently amended):

The apparatus of claim 5 wherein at least a portion of said opening of interruption in said puck member circumferential surface ~~further includes~~ is covered by a spring loaded entrance door.

Claim 7 (withdrawn):

A method of attaching a label to an elongate object including:  
providing at least one label having an adhesive backing and liner;  
partially removing the liner from the label so as to expose a predetermined portion of the label adhesive backing;  
providing an elongate article to be labeled;

moving the elongate article toward the exposed portion of the label adhesive backing;  
engaging a surface of the elongate article with the exposed portion of the label adhesive backing;  
providing a puck assembly having a cavity, said cavity including a pair of wing members, said wing members being normally biased towards one another;  
moving the engaged surface of the elongate article and attached label into the puck cavity and between the normally biased wing members;  
rotating the puck assembly and wing members around the elongate article and attached label, thereby securing the label entirely around the diameter of the elongate article; and  
removing the elongate article and secured label from the puck cavity.

Claim 8 (withdrawn):

A puck assembly for use in a label applicator apparatus, said assembly including:  
a puck element having an interrupted circumferential surface and an outer edge;  
a puck plate, said puck plate being mounted to said puck element on said outer edge;  
a puck mount plate, said puck mount plate defining a relatively flat planar surface having a first side and a second side and oppositely disposed arm portions; and  
means for rotating said puck assembly.

Claim 9 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 8 wherein said puck mount plate includes a plurality of circumferentially spaced bearing members.

Claim 10 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 8 wherein said circumferential surface includes a toothed marginal edge portion, and wherein said means for rotating includes a belt having a notched surface, said notched surface being adapted to engage said toothed marginal edge portion.

Claim 11 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 8 wherein said oppositely disposed arm portions define a generally c-shaped central aperture.

Claim 12 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 8 wherein said interrupted circumferential surface defines an opening to provide entrance into a cavity, said cavity being provided with a pair of complementary wing members, each of said wing members defining two oppositely disposed arm members and defining an obtuse angle between said arm members.

Claim 13 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 12 wherein each of said arm members includes a respective first end, each of said respective first ends being pivotally mounted to said puck member.

Claim 14 (withdrawn):

The puck assembly of claim 12 wherein said wing members are normally biased toward one another.

Claim 15 (withdrawn):

A combination puck and gripper assembly for use in a label applicator apparatus, said assembly including:

a puck subassembly including a rotatable puck element having an interrupted circumferential surface and an outer edge; a puck plate, said puck plate being mounted to said puck element on said outer edge; a puck mount plate, said puck mount plate defining a relatively flat planar surface having a first side and a second side and oppositely disposed arm portions; means for rotating said puck assembly;

a gripper subassembly including at least one gripper element, said at least one gripper element being movable from a first position to a second position relative to said puck subassembly; at least one pair of supporting jaw members, said at least one pair of jaw members supported by said at least one gripper element; means for moving said at least one gripper element from said first position to said second position.